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### **SNOWBIRD TO HOST NATIONAL FIRE WORKSHOP**

As host to the world for the 2002 Winter Olympics, Utah is truly "lighting the fire within." So this is a good time to remember that another type of fire is just around the corner: fire in the wildland/urban interface. This type of fire threatened hundreds of Utah families last year. It most likely will again this year, which is why the state has been selected as the site of a national workshop on fire "wise" living.

The Utah Firewise Communities Workshop is scheduled for April 29 through May 1, 2002, at the Snowbird Resort outside Salt Lake City. More than 100 people are being invited to attend. They include community planners, elected officials, builders, developers, landscapers, insurance agents, homeowner association and real estate representatives, emergency planners and fire officials.

According to Area Fire Management Officer and the Utah Workshop Geographic Coordinator Larry LeForte, each participant will contribute to the national dialogue on this growing trend and will be given a wealth of material to help them better prepare for the natural cycle of fire in their own hometowns.

"We've been very lucky here in Utah the past few years," says state Fire Management Coordinator Dave Dalrymple. "But the fact is, luck does not replace proper planning and community involvement. In the long run, only a well-prepared community plan will prevent a major tragedy."

Hundreds of residents were evacuated locally last year when the Mollie Fire near Santaquin threatened their homes. Only a shift in winds saved their property. A fire on the Camp Williams military reservation threatened a dozen more. All totaled more than 93,000 acres burned in Utah last year.

The Firewise Communities Workshop series is offered nationally through 2003. It's funded by a host of federal agencies and national organizations that comprise the National Wildland/Urban Interface Fire Program. It's also sponsored by more than 30 organizations, including the National Association of Home Builders. Launched in the fall of 1999, the workshop series is credited to-date with engaging nationally nearly 1000 individuals from across the nation who help finance, plan, build, maintain and protect community assets.

If you'd like to learn more about the workshop series or become involved in local planning, visit the Firewise website at [www.firewise.org/communities](http://www.firewise.org/communities).

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